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LARRY CRAIG

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NEWS RELEASE

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CRAIG UNVEILS NEW ‘PODCHAT’

One of several new tools to interact with Idaho

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Idaho Senator Larry Craig announced today the addition of several tools to expand opportunities for Idahoans to be involved in the political process. Central to the offering is his new “podchat,” which allows Idahoans to ask him questions and hear his answers in his own voice.

The podchat is a marriage between an online chat and a podcast. Last week, subscribers to Craig’s bi-weekly electronic newsletter “eNEWS” were invited to submit questions to be answered by Craig. Craig recorded the podchat on January 24, 2006, which is available for free on Craig’s website (<http://craig.senate.gov/podchat>) or through iTunes’ Music Store. Craig will be recording a new podchat each month, and Idahoans are invited to submit questions at <http://craig.senate.gov/podchat>. Like other content on Craig’s website, the podchats will be available for years to come.

Craig also rolled out two other opportunities this week: a Spanish-language website (<http://craig.senate.gov/espanol>) and a video podcast, which features his regularly produced Washington Report, providing a window on the latest happenings in Congress. Craig was the first sitting U.S. Senator to offer his own podcast, and has broken new ground in creating the podchat.

Craig emphasized why he continues to expand the opportunities. **“Since I have been in Congress I have been guided by a number of goals,”** Craig said. **“Goal number one is to deliver timely, high-quality constituent service. An important part of meeting that goal is to communicate with Idahoans, addressing their concerns and letting them know that their voices are being heard. Another important goal is to increase opportunities and incentives for citizen involvement in the political and legislative process.”**

“The podchat, the new Spanish-language website and the video podcast will help me reach those goals, and I hope they prove useful and helpful to Idahoans.”

In 2003, Senator Craig’s website received the Congress Online Project’s Silver Mouse Award, given to Congressional websites that best met quality standards for content and presentation. In addition to the services mentioned above, Craig’s website also offers a range of other services. Constituents can listen to or watch audio and video clips; read issue briefings, which detail Craig’s views and activities on

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issues important to Idahoans; send email to Senator Craig; submit casework requests; read or sign up for eNEWS; submit flag and tour requests and applications for internship, page, and academy nominations; and many other services.

While adding new services and ways to interact with constituents, Craig has also continued with a reliable standby to talk with and listen to Idahoans – town hall meetings. In the past six months, he has held meetings in Idaho Falls, Twin Falls, Jerome, Mountain Home, Meridian, McCall, Boise, Lewiston, Pocatello and Coeur d’Alene.